AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Claim 1   (cancelled)

Claim 2   (currently amended): ~~The~~ A method for communicating between devices, the method comprising:~~of claim 1 wherein the step of automatically negotiating the exchange rate comprises~~:

~~in the first device, providing~~ sending a first synchronization request message from a first device to a [[the]] second device, ~~wherein~~ the first synchronization message ~~includes~~ including a first exchange rate; [[and]]

~~in the second device, processing the first synchronization request message to provide~~ receiving a [[the]] first synchronization acknowledgement message [[to]] in the first device, ~~wherein~~ the first synchronization acknowledgement message ~~includes~~ including one of the first exchange rate and a second exchange rate ~~and wherein the one of the first exchange rate and the second exchange rate returned in the first synchronization acknowledgement message is the~~ as a negotiated exchange rate;

responsive to the negotiated exchange rate, establishing a connection between the first device and the second device; and

responsive to establishing the connection, sending communications to the second device over the connection at the negotiated exchange rate.

Claim 3   (currently amended): The method of claim 2, wherein ~~the method comprising:~~

~~in the first device, providing the first synchronization request message to the second device, wherein~~ the first synchronization message includes a plurality of first exchange rates, [[;]] and

~~in the second device, processing the first synchronization request message to provide the first synchronization acknowledgement message to the first device, wherein~~ the first

synchronization acknowledgement message includes one of the plurality of <u>first</u> exchange rates ~~and wherein the one of the plurality of exchange rates returned in the first synchronization acknowledgement message is~~ as the negotiated exchange rate.

Claim 4   (currently amended): The method of claim 3, <u>further</u> ~~the method~~ comprising<u>:</u>

~~in the first device, automatically~~ adjusting [[the]] <u>a</u> first device exchange rate to the negotiated exchange rate; and

~~in the second device, automatically~~ adjusting [[the]] <u>a</u> second device exchange rate to the negotiated exchange rate.

Claim 5   (currently amended): The method of claim 4<u>, further</u> ~~the method~~ comprising:

testing the connection between the first device and the second device at the negotiated exchange rate.

Claim 6   (currently amended): The method of claim 5<u>, further</u> ~~the method~~ comprising:

in the first device, receiving a suggested exchange rate from an application program;

~~automatically~~ renegotiating the exchange rate between the first device and the second device [[the]] to the suggested exchange rate; <u>and</u>

~~exchanging~~ <u>sending further</u> communications ~~between~~ <u>to</u> ~~the first device and~~ the second device over the connection at the suggested exchange rate.

Claim 7   (currently amended): The method of claim 6<u>,</u> wherein the step of ~~automatically~~ renegotiating the exchange rate comprises:

~~in the first device providing~~ <u>sending</u> a second synchronization request message to the second device that includes the suggested exchange rate; and

~~in the second device,processing~~ <u>receiving</u> ~~the second synchronization request message to provide~~ a second synchronization acknowledgement message<u>,</u> ~~to the first device, wherein~~ the second synchronization acknowledgement message ~~includes~~ <u>including</u> the suggested exchange rate.

Claim 8   (currently amended): The method of claim 7<u>, further</u> ~~the method~~ comprising:

~~in the first device, automatically~~ adjusting the first device exchange rate to the suggested exchange rate; and

~~in the second device, automatically~~ adjusting the second device exchange rate to the suggested exchange rate.

Claim 9   (currently amended): The method of claim 8<u>, further</u> ~~the method~~ comprising:

testing the connection between the first device and the second device at the suggested exchange rate.

Claim 10   (currently amended): The method of claim 9<u>,</u> wherein the suggested exchange rate is [[the]] <u>a</u> highest common exchange rate between the first device and the second device.

Claim 11   (original): The method of claim 9 wherein the step of testing the connection comprises:

exchanging full duplex test messages and test acknowledgment messages between the first device and the second device at the suggested exchange rate.

Claim 12   (currently amended): The method of claim 9<u>, further</u> ~~the method~~ comprising:

responsive to an error during testing, ~~automatically~~ renegotiating the exchange rate between the first device and the second device to a lower exchange rate; and

~~exchanging~~ <u>sending</u> [[the]] <u>further</u> communications ~~between the first device and~~ <u>to</u> the second device at the lower exchange rate.

Claim 13   (currently amended): The method of claim [[1]] 2, wherein the step of ~~exchanging~~ sending the communications ~~between the first device and~~ to the second device comprises[[:]]

        ~~in the first device,~~ providing an information message to the second device that includes the communications; and further comprising

        ~~in the second device,~~ processing the information message to provide a supervisory response message to the first device.

Claim 14   (currently amended): The method of claim 13, ~~the method comprising:~~ wherein the supervisory response message indicates a validation of the information message condition.

Claim 15   (currently amended): The method of claim 13, ~~the method comprising:~~ wherein the supervisory response message indicates an error in the information message condition.

Claim 16   (currently amended): The method of claim 13, ~~the method comprising:~~ wherein the supervisory response message indicates the validation of the information message condition and a receiver not ready condition.

Claim 17   (currently amended): The method of claim [[1]] 2, wherein the communications are packetized communications.

Claim 18   (currently amended): The method of claim [[1]] 2, wherein the communications are serial communications ~~between the first device and the second device~~.

Claim 19   (cancelled)

Claim 20   (currently amended): [[The]] <u>A machine readable medium having stored thereon</u> <u>machine readable instructions, the instructions comprising:</u> ~~product of claim 19 wherein the~~ ~~processing system instructions comprise:~~

first ~~device~~ instructions operational when executed on a first device ~~processor~~ to <u>send</u> ~~provide~~ a first synchronization request message to [[the]] <u>a</u> second device, ~~wherein~~ the first synchronization message ~~includes~~ <u>including</u> a first exchange rate<u>, and to receive a first</u> <u>synchronization acknowledgement message, the first synchronization acknowledgement message</u> <u>including one of the first exchange rate and a second exchange rate as a negotiated exchange rate;</u> <u>and wherein</u>

~~second device instructions operational when executed on a second device processor to~~ ~~process the first synchronization request message and provide a first synchronization~~ ~~acknowledgement message to the first device, wherein the first synchronization acknowledgement~~ ~~message includes one of the first exchange rate and a second exchange rate and wherein the one of~~ ~~the first exchange rate and the scond exchange rate returned in the first synchronization~~ ~~acknowledgement message is the_negotiated exchange rate.~~

<u>the first instructions are further operational to cooperate in establishing a connection</u> <u>between the first device and the second device, and to send communications to the second device</u> <u>over the connection at the negotiated exchange rate.</u>

Claim 21   (currently amended): The <u>machine readable medium</u> ~~product~~ of claim 20<u>,</u> wherein the first ~~device~~ instructions are operational to ~~provide the first synchronization request message to~~ ~~the second device, wherein the first synchronization message includes~~ <u>include</u> a plurality of exchange rates <u>in the first synchronization request message</u>; and <u>further comprising</u>

[[the]] second ~~device~~ instructions [[are]] operational <u>when executed on a second device</u> to process the first synchronization request message to provide the first synchronization acknowledgement message to the first device, <u>and include one of the plurality of exchange rates in</u> <u>the first synchronization acknowledgement message as the negotiated exchange rate.</u> ~~wherein the~~ ~~first synchronization acknowledgement message includes one of the plurality of exchange rates and~~

~~wherein the one of the plurality of exchange rates returned in the first synchronization~~
~~acknowledgement message is the negotiated exchange rate.~~

Claim 22   (currently amended): The <u>machine readable medium</u> ~~product~~ of claim 21<u>,</u> wherein·
the first ~~device~~ instructions are operational to ~~automatically~~ adjust [[the]] <u>a</u> first device exchange
rate to the negotiated exchange rate, and the second ~~device~~ instructions are operational to
~~automatically~~ adjust [[the]] <u>a</u> second device exchange rate to the negotiated exchange rate.

Claim 23   (currently amended): The <u>machine readable medium</u> ~~product~~ of claim 22<u>,</u> wherein
the ~~processing system~~ <u>first</u> instructions <u>and the second instructions</u> are operational to test the
connection between the first device and the second device at the negotiated exchange rate.

Claim 24   (currently amended): The <u>machine accessible medium</u> ~~product~~ of claim 23<u>,</u> wherein
the <u>first</u> ~~processing system~~ instructions are operational to receive a suggested exchange rate from an
application program<u>, and the first instructions and the second instructions are operational to</u>
~~automatically~~ renegotiate the exchange rate between the first device and the second device to the
suggested exchange rate, and <u>to</u> exchange <u>further</u> communications between the first device and the
second device over the connection at the suggested exchange rate.

Claim 25   (currently amended): The <u>machine accessible medium</u> ~~product~~ of claim 24<u>,</u> wherein
the first ~~device~~ instructions are operational to provide a second synchronization request message to
the second device that includes the suggested exchange rate and the second device instructions are
operational to process the second synchronization request message to provide a second
synchronization acknowledgement message to the first device, ~~wherein~~ the second synchronization
acknowledgement message <u>including</u> ~~includes~~ the suggested exchange rate.

Claim 26   (currently amended): The <u>machine readable medium</u> ~~product~~ of claim 25<u>,</u> wherein
the first ~~device~~ instructions are operational to ~~automatically~~ adjust the first device exchange rate to
the suggested exchange rate and the second ~~device~~ instructions are operational to ~~automatically~~
adjust the second device exchange rate to the suggested exchange rate.

Claim 27   (currently amended): The machine readable medium product of claim 26, wherein the processing system first instructions and the second instructions are operational to test the connection between the first device and the second device at the suggested exchange rate.

Claim 28   (currently amended): The machine readable medium product of claim 27, wherein the suggested exchange rate is [[the]] a highest common exchange rate between the first device and the second device.

Claim 29   (currently amended): The machine readable medium product of claim 27, wherein the first device instructions and the second device instructions are operational to cause exchange of full duplex test messages and test acknowledgment messages between the first device and the second device at the suggested exchange rate.

Claim 30   (currently amended): The machine readable medium product of claim 27, wherein the first device instructions and the second device instructions are operational to automatically renegotiate the exchange rate between the first device and the second device to a lower exchange rate responsive to an error during the exchange of the test messages and to cause exchange of [[the]] further communications between the first device and the second device at the lower exchange rate.

Claim 31   (currently amended): The machine readable medium product of claim [[19]] 20, wherein the first device instructions are operational to send provide an information message to the second device that includes the communications and [[the]] to receive second device instructions are operational to process the information message to provide a supervisory response message [[to]] from the first second device.

Claim 32   (currently amended): The machine accessible medium product of claim 31, wherein the supervisory response message indicates a validation of the information message condition.

Claim 33   (currently amended): The machine accessible medium product of claim 31, wherein the supervisory response message indicates an error in the information message condition.

Claim 34   (currently amended): The <u>machine accessible medium</u> ~~product~~ of claim 31, wherein the supervisory response message indicates the validation of the information message condition and a receiver not ready condition.

Claim 35   (currently amended): The <u>machine accessible medium</u> ~~product~~ of claim [[19]] <u>20</u>, wherein the communications are packetized communications.

Claim 36   (currently amended): The <u>machine accessible medium</u> ~~product~~ of claim [[19]] <u>20</u>, wherein the communications are serial communications~~between the first device and the second device~~.

Claim 37   (currently amended): A point-to-point ~~protocol~~ <u>communication apparatus</u>, comprising:

    <u>a first device adapted for sending to a second device a first synchronization request message including a first exchange rate, receiving a first synchronization acknowledgement message generated in response to the first synchronization request, the first synchronization acknowledgement including as a negotiated exchange rate one of the first exchange rate and a second exchange rate, establishing a connection with the second device, and for sending to the second device communications at the negotiated exchange rate.</u>

    ~~a synchronization request message, wherein the synchronization request message comprises at least one exchange rate for the exchange of communications between a first device and a second device; and~~

    ~~a synchronization acknowledgment message, wherein the synchronization acknowledgment message comprises one of the at least one exchange rate and a lower exchange rate.~~

Claim 38   (currently amended): The <u>communication apparatus</u> ~~protocol~~ of claim 37, <u>wherein the second device is configured to provide</u> ~~the protocol comprising~~:

a data acknowledgment message that includes an indication for a first application program, <u>the indication confirming delivery of information sent by the first application program to a second application program.</u> ~~that confirms information sent to a second application program by the first application program was delivered to the second application program.~~

Claim 39   (currently amended): The <u>communication apparatus</u> ~~protocol~~ of claim 37<u>,</u> wherein the synchronization request message comprises a plurality of exchange rates and ~~wherein~~ the synchronization acknowledgment message comprises one of the plurality of exchange rates.

Claim 40   (currently amended): A ~~protocol message comprising~~ <u>computer-readable data signal encoded on a medium of transmission, the data signal comprising</u>:

<u>a first synchronization acknowledgement message generated by a first device in response to reception of a first synchronization request message including a first exchange rate, the first synchronization acknowledgement message including one of the first exchange rate and a second exchange rate as a negotiated exchange rate.</u> ~~protocol message comprising:~~
~~a message identification field;~~

~~a message length field; and~~

~~a data field, wherein the data field includes at least one exchange rate for the exchange of communications between a first device and a second device.~~

Claim 41   (currently amended): The <u>data signal</u> ~~protocol message~~ of claim [[35]] <u>40,</u> wherein <u>the first synchronization request message includes a plurality of first exchange rates</u> ~~data field includes a plurality of exchange rates~~ supported by the first device.